



TEXAS GENERAL LAND OFFICE

Community Development and Revitalization

► Tips to Improve Grant Applications

The Texas General Land Office (GLO) has compiled suggestions on how grant applicants can adjust costs or project impacts to gain the most points for funding sources that support flooding. These tips are based on the experience with the GLO and other programs. The review identified that 43% of the application improvements were related to cost, location, or project impact, which is cost + location.

While every grant opportunity is different, these tips can be applied to other grant programs with similar scoring criteria.

BEFORE YOU GET STARTED, KNOW THE SCORING CRITERIA

- Familiarize yourself with the scoring criteria of the grant program.
- Attend any trainings provided by the funding organization and review all application materials.

Criteria	Recommendation	Potential Impact
Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR)	<p>Use a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) or U.S. Army Corps of Engineers BCR tool.</p> <p>Document assumptions used to calculate your BCR.</p> <p>Consider residual benefits or non-traditional benefits from components such as nature-based solutions to further boost your BCR.</p>	<p>Improves BCR value.</p> <p>A higher BCR demonstrates a greater return on investment in areas such as property losses avoided, risk of injuries or fatalities prevented, or economic disruption or environmental losses avoided.</p>
Project Design	<p>Consider proposing a multi-phase project to reduce the cost. Reducing the funding request for the project can have cascading benefits to other parts of the grant application, like project impact.</p>	<p>Phased projects are frequently viewed favorably for future funding by grantors. Even though the applicant will not receive all the funding upfront, a first phase of funding for your project will help the grantee make progress on the project, show proof of concept, and build forward momentum.</p> <p>Phasing allows larger-scale projects to be completed over several grant cycle phases.</p> <p>Larger-scale projects are often more comprehensive approaches to resolve flood resilience problems rather than band-aid fixes, and for that reason may be more favorably received.</p>
Cost Share	<p>If points were previously lost or not awarded for leverage or match, consider finding alternative funding for as little as 0.5% - 1% of the project budget being requested.</p>	<p>Even if a match is not required, it provides the grantor or lender with confidence the grant applicant team is committed to the project.</p>
Loans	<p>Consider a loan. In some cases, a grantor may offer more than one way to fund the project.</p>	<p>If a loan option is available, it may provide an alternative way to obtain the funding.</p>
Project Location and Service Area	<p>All upstream/downstream effects of the project should be considered to fully capture the benefits of the project over the project service area.</p> <p>Use FEMA's Community Lifelines to help frame the scope of project benefits over the service area.</p> <p>Compile documentation to support any claims made.</p> <p>Partner with neighboring communities to increase the scale of a given project.</p>	<p>Benefits to homeowners, businesses, emergency operations, and supply chains, should be considered and may help you enlarge the project service area.</p> <p>Location related metrics may improve with increase in project scale/service area.</p>
Project Impact: Beneficiaries	<p>Increase the number of project beneficiaries to lower cost per beneficiary. For instance, could the project service area include multiple cities or counties?</p>	<p>An increase in the number of persons benefitting within a project service area may demonstrate a greater impact for the investment.</p>
Project Impact: Cost	<p>Try phasing the project to lower the total project cost for that phase to improve the funds spent per person metric.</p>	<p>Projects that cost less per person benefitting are typically more favorable.</p>